bottom will imprint nine squares on the wet soil, and as it is turned another nine will be imprinted so that when continued the field is laid out in tiny squares. Three or four seedlings are planted on the corners of the square made by the waku. 243 804 413

Men operate the frame. As they turn it, making the square pattern on the damp soil, women follow behind with the seedlings. The frame has been in use in Matsuda for about fifteen years. An Okinawan agricultural school student is said to have invented it. It was not used in the southern villages studied, an interesting sidelight on the slowness of innovation even on a small island like Okinawa, for many farmers in the south expressed surprise at its use and had not heard of it. The device is helpful to those with large plots. In Matsuda, there are not many of these frames, but borrowing is frequent. [462] [176] [184] [426]

In contrast with recent introductions, such as the universal treadle thresher, the frame seems to be confined to one geographic area. The reason for this may be that the use of the thresher was actively encouraged by the Japanese as a successful time and labor saving device, while the frame was not similarly publicized. 243 804 [407]

Another method, a more traditional one, is to use a piece of wood the same length as the waku with seven little knobs and the two ends to give the nine spaces. This is the jiyogi. A piece of string stretched from one end of the field to the other is used to get a straight line along a row. When the planting has taken place along one row, the jiyogi is used to measure off one space between rows, the guide line is moved over and the operation repeated. This achieves the same purpose as the frame or the string with the markers. Men are more likely to handle these operations, the women following along with the transplanting. But the division of labor is by no means hard and fast. [462]

Care of rice until its maturity. Rice set out in squares is easier to cultivate, weed, and harvest. During its growth, it will be necessary occasionally to loosen the soil or to break up clods which escaped the initial working. There may be some temporary drainage of water off the fields at these times. 243

Weeding rice is usually done by hand, though once in a while a farmer has a hand cultivator. Weeding the rice field is an unrelenting job which is done about once a week. More attention is given to this task when the plants are younger. Weeding is worked in with other daily chores, and all members of the family may participate.

The rice is now allowed to grow with the hope that strong winds or a typhoon will not blow over the slender shoots or submerge them. If the rice is submerged when the shoots are still fairly young, they will gradually right themselves. Farmers say that attempting to upright the plants by hand will not work. The quality of rice once submerged is poor and sometimes half the rice in the plot is lost. If the submersion occurs when the plants are near maturity and the stalks are 20 or 25

798 796 Similar worship may take place at a spring (isumi). Near Gushichan village there is a large spring. Stone stairs have been built up, amphitheatre-like, around it. Prayers are offered by villagers, or substantial numbers of them, on New Year and on the 5th day of the 5th lunar month. In daily life, the spring is a favorite place for laundering and bathing.

796 798 796 There are three well gods in Hinatogawa, and they are worshipped at the three public wells scattered throughout the village. The people of the village, or large numbers of them, assemble at these wells for prayer at various times of the year, the most important being on New Year and on boat racing day. Sake and a box of candy are placed before the well as offerings of thanks for water.

This village has also a place for the worship of the sea god. This is a simple stone on a small shelf, on a barren spot of the seashore, scarcely distinguishable from the rocks scattered in natural disarray by the waves. In a high wind, the remains of the offerings and the charcoal sticks are swept out to sea. The most important observance here occurs on the 4th day of the 5th month, the day of the sea festival and the boat races. Fishermen come to the place by boat and make offerings of sharks' fins. On this day, the whole village assembles twice to pray at the spot, once before, and once after the races and the celebration. Individual or family worship is common on New Year and at O-Bon. On the equinoctial holiday of the full moon, the headman, the heads of the neighborhood groups, the council and retired elder men assemble, offer thanks and pray for continued plenty from the sea. Very close to the palace of the sea god, a short round stick of bamboo or of thick miscanthus may be stuck in a pile of rocks. Near the top, a dried fish (usually the ika) tail is placed in a slit. In the center there is a slit for another but larger part of the dried fish.

796 798 178 The palace of the mountain god, though its identity is uncertain, is near the palace of the sea god. It is under an overhanging rock along the seashore. This seems an unusual place for the home of a mountain god, but seafarers may have prayed to the god in thanks for guiding them safely in. It seems now to have fallen into disuse. It is now partially overgrown with pandanus and little is known of the place.

796 798 782 Matsuda. In Matsuda, there are beliefs in well, mountain top, and tree grove spirits. There are 8 wells here and family groups usually divide up and worship at one of the wells. After drinking some of the water, thanks are offered to the well god.

796 128 The gods of the mountain top and the tree groves are difficult to understand. Little seems to be known about them locally, and it is difficult to disengage historical from religious elements.

● [796] 784 798 One popular explanation is that these gods were the intentional invention of Saion, the 18th century statesman and authority on forestry and agriculture. But this seems highly unlikely. It is more likely that Saion capitalised on the ancient interdict against cutting down